

FireFighter

The magazine of the Fire Brigades Union www.fbu.org.uk

November/December 2014



STOP PRESS
PENSIONS:
FOUR DAY STRIKE
CALLED

THE
RING
OF FIRE
TOUR
SAVE OUR FIRE & RESCUE SERVICE



Matt Wrack

Government robbery continues – four day strike called

Pensions

"My goal is clear: to get the best deal possible for firefighters and resolve this dispute."

Those were the words about the pensions dispute that Penny Mordaunt, the Westminster fire minister, wrote to all firefighters in August.

The FBU negotiations team was told that the minister was speaking to others in government to see what could be done to resolve this dispute.

The Department for Communities and Local Government negotiators asked the FBU to provide drafts for pension regulations which they said they were now considering from a legal point of view.

However, at our most recent meeting with the minister, no revised proposals were offered. I know all firefighters will be outraged.

We have been patient, we have always been willing to negotiate and we have always acted with complete integrity – as the public would expect from firefighters.

This government may praise us when we respond to major incidents but their actions demonstrate utter contempt for firefighters and the work of our service.

That is why, at the same time as attacking our pensions, they are forcing through the biggest cuts in the history of the fire service in the UK.

As *Firefighter* goes to press, firefighters in England are preparing to take four days



Matt Wrack joins Ring of Fire campaigners in Watford

of strike action. We are also preparing the next round of our political and legal challenges to these attacks.

We need to stand strong and stand united. Please follow developments and ensure you support the campaign on picket lines or in our political campaigning.

Carr report – yet another attack on the FBU

A report published last month by the government has accused a number of trade unions, including our own, of so-called "extreme tactics" in industrial and political campaigning.

These claims are based on unsubstantiated allegations and, in some cases, criticism of campaigning methods which are perfectly lawful and acceptable.

The report, by barrister Bruce Carr QC, is a smear job on a number of trade unions.

It is no accident that the FBU has been included. It is because we have dared to stand up and challenge the government and our employers over the pension attacks and over local attacks on the service

and on our conditions.

During the run-up to the next general election in May 2015 trade unionists will no doubt face this kind of political and media onslaught as our opponents try to create the circumstances for yet another round of attacks on the rights of workers and of trade unions.

Membership benefits

We have recently negotiated a number of new benefits for members which now include health, shopping and insurance costs. I recommend that all members check these out and see how you can take advantage at www.fbu.org.uk/membership

Ring of Fire

I was very pleased to speak at a number of Ring of Fire events that took place up and down the country over September and October.

The London show was attended by comedian Russell Brand who featured the event in his online news show *The Trews*. This approach was different to how other campaigns have been conducted. However, it

certainly allowed us to bring our message to new audiences – as can be seen from the numbers who viewed Russell Brand's online report.

If you weren't able to make any of the events there's a chance to catch up with the action on pages 10–13.

TTIP

The disastrous Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership being negotiated in secret by the European Union and US would, if agreed, have major implications for all UK public services including the fire and rescue service.

MPs will be asked to nod through any agreement, but some parts of it could come into force without even this minimal scrutiny.

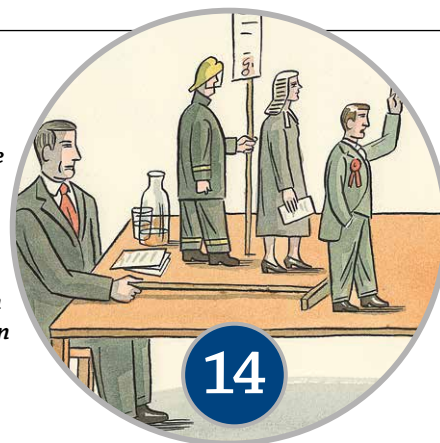
In short, it would give multinational corporations the right to carve up all public services and sue the government if they do not make enough money from the deal.

TTIP is a threat to public sector workers and taxpayers alike and the FBU will be campaigning with other unions to oppose it.

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Pensions dispute: The FBU will continue to use every tool at its disposal – continuing negotiations, political action, legal action and industrial action



FBU members and the union blimp took part in TUC demonstrations to demand pay rises as new figures showed that living standards since 2008 have fallen further than at any time since the 1870s

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Translation of message of solidarity to the FBU from the Union Nacional de Empleados/National Union of Employees (UNE) Nicaragua

Brothers and sisters

I am writing to you to express greetings and solidarity on behalf of the public sector UNE, a sister trade union which has undergone many years of struggle.

We are convinced that the problems of the world – poverty, hunger and unemployment combined with low wages and the failure to comply with collective agreements – are the result of an exploitative capitalist model which promotes inequality and exclusion. The working class, our organisations and our members must fight together to combat this and to build a just and equal society.

Today we want to express our solidarity with the just fight of firefighters in the UK who are having to fight against the UK's neo-liberal government led by that faithful servant of savage capitalism David Cameron.

More than ever it is necessary to mobilise in the streets of the UK to demand policies which will eliminate social inequality and to demand decent wages and the implementation of collective bargaining agreements.

Victory is not something we can achieve alone – the trade union struggle is global and we remain in solidarity with you.

Long live the UK working class
Long live the FBU

FBU condemns government's union report as a Tory smear

Union law

A government report on industrial action by trade union members has been described as a smear against the entire trade union movement by the FBU.

The Carr review, which was commissioned after a dispute at the Grangemouth refinery in Scotland earlier this year, reaches conclusions on a number of issues hinting at law changes that would further hit trade union campaigning and representation, including banning strikes in emergency services like fire and rescue.

The report accuses unions, including the FBU, of intimidating non-striking workers and managers during industrial disputes.

Bruce Carr QC, the author of the report, said in August that it would not make any specific recommendations to changes in the law because of a "politicised" background.

Matt Wrack, FBU general secretary,

said: "This review, a taxpayer-funded exercise on behalf of the Tory party, is a series of smears against the Fire Brigades Union and the entire UK trade union movement, just as we predicted it would be when it was first announced.

"This hatchet job barely mentions the victimisation FBU members have suffered when undertaking campaigning or strike action and ignores evidence of the extreme tactics used by some employers throughout recent disputes.

"The Carr report is a cynical Tory publicity stunt, predictably published when midwives, health and other public service workers have been forced into industrial action by a government continually attacking their pay and conditions."

Trade union rights in the UK are some of the most restrictive in the Western world and it was made clear at this year's annual Conservative party conference that attacks on the union movement will continue if the

party wins next year's general election.

Francis Maude, minister for the cabinet office and paymaster general, stated again that the next Tory government would ban strikes that were not supported in a ballot with a turnout of more than 50%; would require unions to undertake expensive balloting for each industrial action taken; and would continue slashing trade union facilities in the public sector.

These attacks on unions came at the same time that Elizabeth Truss, secretary of state for environment, told conference that she wanted to protect the country against the "ravages" of climate change and flooding.

Wrack said: "This proves that the government want firefighters to do more, with fewer resources and don't want to hear from us when we raise how dangerous cuts to the service really are.

"It's clear that if the Tories win the next general election they will continue their anti-union and pro-austerity agenda."



Evidence ignored: Ian Leahair, FBU EC member for London, lies injured after being run over by a fire engine manned by strikebreakers in 2010 as FBU members picketed the London Fire Brigade's Southwark training centre in south London where strikebreaking firefighters were based

Sam Rye: The issues do not go away and we continue to fight for equality

www.fbu.org.uk



Hereford and Worcester FBU members campaigning against the cuts during the union's Ring of Fire tour – see page 10

Authority members vote for longer 999 response times

Hereford and Worcester

Hereford and Worcester Fire and Rescue Authority has pushed through cuts, including 34 job losses, that it accepts will increase 999 emergency response times, putting the public at risk.

The authority voted to cut two retained fire engines and will reduce the number of firefighters on each engine to four – against the recommended minimum of five that is needed to guarantee public health and safety.

Steven Gould, FBU Hereford and Worcester brigade secretary, said: “We think the decision to set the minimum of four firefighters on an engine puts firefighters and the public at risk – we want to see a minimum of five in order to guarantee

public protection.

“We are disgusted at the fire authority's decision to implement cuts to the local fire service. But the fact that there have been some concessions by a reactionary Tory-led fire authority is testament to the huge level of public support there is to save our local fire and rescue service.

“It is scandalous, therefore, that the public has not been consulted about these cuts when there is broad support for a £5 increase in council tax to properly fund the service.”

Opponents collected more than 27,000 signatures against the cuts from local people during a nine-month campaign.

Original plans by the authority to cut ten fire engines were dropped as a result of local grassroots campaigning.

Mayor ‘playing politics’ with lockout plans

London

London Assembly members have rejected proposals by mayor Boris Johnson to “lock out” firefighters and dock pay for entire shifts, even if they take industrial action that lasts for just a few hours of a shift.

The mayor was accused of “playing politics with people's lives” in a move that would put public safety at risk and also inflame the ongoing national

pensions dispute.

The plans were drafted on the mayor's orders by Ron Dobson, commissioner of the London Fire Brigade, who, as recently as June, argued that such tactics “would have a major industrial relations impact”.

Paul Embury, regional secretary for the FBU in London, said: “It would have been a highly regressive step and poisoned industrial relations to lock out

firefighters.

“We think the mayor of London should respect the decision of his fire authority and not do anything to inflame the situation further.

“A lockout in London would have thrown a hand grenade into the national dispute on pensions.

“Instead of provoking London firefighters, the mayor should use his influence to help bring this dispute to an end.”

SOUNDING OFF

Farewell Kerry

Samantha Rye, FBU national women's committee acting secretary, bids farewell to outgoing secretary Kerry Baigent and reports on the work of the committee

Kerry Baigent has been the FBU women's committee secretary for the last decade. She has recently been forced to resign from the fire service after over 21 years as a firefighter and has had to stand down from her position in the FBU.

As you can imagine, we are all really sad to see her go. Kerry's contribution on behalf of our women members and the union as a whole has been outstanding. We would like to take this opportunity to thank Kerry (left) for all her hard work, dedication, support and friendship over many years.

Kerry fought hard for equality and to make the work environment a better place, not only for women but for all members. For the time being I will be acting secretary and Helen Harrison will be acting chair.

We will continue the work on behalf of women and all members.

Before she left, Kerry and I met Penny Mordaunt, the Westminster fire minister, to discuss the current pensions issue speaking not only on behalf of women but for all members.

We are currently organising our AGM to be held at Wortley Hall, Sheffield on 5 December. Other key dates we are planning towards include the Women's TUC in London next March and our annual school at Wortley Hall on 10–12 April 2015.

Our domestic violence policy is ready to launch, and this coincides with our continued work on a campaign to raise awareness and tackle domestic abuse.

The issues do not seem to go away and our women reps continue to represent women around the country and fight for equality – whether it be uniform that fits properly, facilities in the workplace or maternity issues.



JANINA STRUK

Brown case is settled but anger remains

Hertfordshire

A settlement has been reached between former Cheshunt firefighter Ashley Brown and Hertfordshire County Council concerning his dismissal after giving 25 years' exemplary, life-saving service to the people of Hertfordshire.

The terms of settlement are to remain confidential, but it is understood that the firefighter will not be returning to the service. The FBU said it hoped that, whatever the agreed terms were, they would bring some relief from the harrowing experience Ashley and his family had endured since his dismissal in December last year.

Keith Handscomb, FBU executive council member for East Anglia, said: "This may bring Ashley's unfair dismissal claim to an end, but the bad smell around this case remains as pungent as ever.

"Serious misgivings remain about the conduct of the original disciplinary proceedings, conflicting statements about the role of the chief fire officer and contradictory proclamations from the council about their power to intervene.

"Disciplinary procedures must be overhauled and the council should immediately reinstate the right for firefighters to have appeals against dismissal heard by county councillors.



Ashley Brown's colleagues demonstrated on his behalf

Sign up now for new FBU courses

FBU learning

If you, a family member or a friend have ever wanted to take a new vocational course, then the FBU's National Learning Centre may be the answer.

The centre offers courses over a range of subjects and is now asking for expressions of interest for the academic year 2014-15.

Trevor Shanahan, FBU union learning fund manager, said: "We have been able to widen the course subject list even further to deliver a range of courses." They include:

- Mental health awareness
- Exercise studies
- Equality and diversity
- Principles of dementia
- Understanding end of life
- Team leading knowledge
- Customer services knowledge
- Nutrition and health
- ICT
- Functional skills.

If you are interested, visit www.fbueducation.org to register your interest.

Day Off – page 20

Listen to us on cuts and merger, says FBU

Dorset and Wiltshire

Firefighters in Dorset and Wiltshire have told local politicians that they must take heed of the views of professional firefighters as they consider plans to merge the two fire and rescue services.

They were responding to a public consultation on possible responses to funding cuts. It includes a number of options – the foremost being a merger.

The FBU submissions call for "long term, strategic investment in the service".

Karen Adams, FBU brigade secretary in Dorset, said: "These are desperate times. Funding cuts are already having a serious impact, with

firefighters expected to work in their own time, and on low pay rates, just to keep fire engines on the run and support community safety events.

"We require, and the public deserve, a properly financed, locally accountable fire and rescue service – no matter what name it bears."

Brent Thorley, FBU brigade secretary in Wiltshire, demanded that politicians listen to the views of firefighters.

Their decisions had made the situation even worse, he said. "Against the advice of professional firefighters, they have implemented a series of council tax freezes which have put emergency cover at risk."

IN BRIEF

Health cash plan

● FBU members can have access to a health cash plan benefit that can help to manage everyday healthcare and wellbeing needs by allowing members to claim cash back on expenses such as dental check-ups and treatments, eyesight tests, new glasses, contact lenses and therapy treatments.

For example, someone who pays £13.50 a month could claim

- £150 towards dental costs
- £150 toward optical costs
- £500 towards therapy treatments.

If you would like to join the FBU-endorsed plan, please go to www.bhsf.co.uk/fbu and download the form. Alternatively please call the Helpdesk on 0800 622 552.

Green jobs study

● Dave Green, FBU national officer, has contributed a case study to the Campaign Against Climate Change's report *One million climate jobs: Tackling the environmental and economic crises*.

In his report on floods Green writes: "A declining number of firefighters are being asked to do more in flood rescue now, and will be asked to do far more in the future.

"Climate adaptation is an immediate industrial issue for the fire and rescue service."

Christmas benefit

● Paul Heaton and Jacqui Abbott, formerly of The Beautiful South, will be performing at Manchester Academy 2 to raise money for education and campaign projects to fight racism, in an event sponsored by the FBU and other unions.

Tickets for 12 December are available from www.manchesteracademy.ticketline.co.uk.

The performers are asking concert-goers to bring non-perishable items to be collected for people who are finding it hard to provide for themselves at a time of government imposed austerity.

NEWS
FOCUS

'Austerity is about robbery. It's about transferring wealth from the poor to the rich'



FBU banners provided a blaze of colour on the London demonstration

It's time to end austerity

Austerity protests

Firefighters joined other trade unionists on a series of mass demonstrations organised by the TUC in London, Glasgow and Belfast on 18 October to demand a pay rise.

The demonstrations coincided with the publication of research by the New Economics Foundation that shows living standards have fallen so far since the crash of 2008 that you would have to go as far back as Victorian Britain in the 1870s to see a similar decline.

People's average real income – after taking into account price rises – has fallen by 8.5% since 2008 and shows no sign of improving, despite government statistics showing the economy coming out of recession and employment rising.

The fire and rescue service has suffered crippling attacks on pay. When the Tory-led coalition came to power in 2010 it imposed two years of pay freezes. Then each year from 2012 has seen a below-inflation 1% increase – effectively a pay cut for firefighters.

Frances O'Grady, TUC general

secretary, told demonstrators in London, who marched from the Embankment to Hyde Park: "Our message is that, after the longest and deepest pay squeeze in recorded history, it's time to end the lockout that has kept the vast majority from sharing in the economic recovery."

Wearing a "We rescue people, not banks" t-shirt, Matt Wrack, FBU general secretary, told the thousands gathered that the austerity agenda: "... is about robbery. It's about transferring wealth from the poor to the rich, making us pay for the banking crisis of 2007 and 2008.

"They wage a nasty war on the poor, on people with disabilities, on people on benefits and the unemployed. But what about corporate welfare? What about subsidies to private landlords? That's where we should focus."

Wrack added, to applause from the audience, that the railways and the energy industries needed to be renationalised to truly serve the public.

91-year-old Harry Smith, author of *Harry's Last Stand* who stole the show at this year's Labour Party conference, gave

a rousing speech about the horrors of healthcare for the average person before the founding of the NHS in 1948.

At the Scottish TUC's demonstration in Glasgow, Roddy Robertson, FBU EC member for Scotland, said: "It was a great demo, which brought together all workers in a common cause – we all need a pay rise.

"Whilst it is welcome that the Scottish government has a no-redundancy policy, we have still lost one in five public sector jobs since 2010 and far too many workers are finding themselves in working poverty, this needs to stop.

"Let's look to Iceland: jail the bankers and don't blame or put the suffering on the public."

In Belfast, the N Ireland committee of the Irish Congress of Trade Unions organised a demonstration where frontline union members were the speakers on stage, telling of their first-hand experiences of low pay and austerity.

The day marked Jim Barbour's last day as FBU vice-president and N Ireland EC member as he retires from the fire and rescue service.



FBU's role in the secret

Apartheid South Africa may now be a distant nightmare. But it is worth recalling the contribution of the Fire Brigades Union and, in particular, two of its members during that long battle to overthrow the racist regime.

A recent book, *London Recruits, the*

secret war against apartheid, has shed light on an important chapter in the struggle against apartheid.

It is written by Ken Keable – a member of the London Recruits, an organisation set up by the African National Congress (ANC) to encourage white non-South

Africans to go to the country to support the struggle.

Writing to the union about the London recruits earlier this year, Ken said: "Some planted 'leaflet bombs' – a harmless device that blasted hundreds of leaflets high into the air after the person who

VIEW
FROM THE
AERIAL LADDER
PLATFORM

*MPs and trade union leaders join
Anti-Apartheid protesters in a London
demonstration in November 1985*

STEFANO CAGNONI/REPORT ARCHIVE/REPORTDIGITAL.CO.UK

war against apartheid

had planted it had got safely away. Some unfurled banners, some posted thousands of letters and packages, some helped ANC fighters to enter South Africa, some did reconnaissance and some smuggled large quantities of weapons."

During his research, Ken found evidence

of two FBU members who took part in anti-apartheid activities but does not know their names. He says: "In 1981 two FBU members had gone to South Africa to set off some leaflet bombs to celebrate the sixtieth anniversary of the South African Communist Party (which was very closely

allied to the African National Congress)." If anyone knows their names, please contact *Firefighter*.

■ See www.londonrecruits.org.uk for stories about the London Recruits discovered since the book was published. This story deserves to be on it.



Support in Bristol and Portsmouth



Thousands of sign

Signing up in Plymouth ... a good turnout





Ring of Fire – we've only just begun

Campaign will continue across the country until general election

Signatures collected



Out in Yarmouth

The FBU's Ring of Fire tour made its way across the United Kingdom in September and October to highlight the damage done to the fire and rescue service by the government's austerity agenda.

Sounding the alarm: the future of our fire and rescue service, a report compiled and published by the union, found that since 2010 more than 5,000 firefighters' jobs have been lost; more than 39 fire stations have been closed; and that over the past 10 years 999 emergency response times have increased on average by two minutes.

The aim of the tour, said national officer Dave Green, was to highlight to the public how the service is being decimated by the coalition government's cuts and to make the future of our nation's fire and rescue service central to next year's general election.

"We are calling for investment in the fire and rescue service now," Green said. "The report shows the high standard of work firefighters do in the UK will be drastically curtailed if the cuts keep on coming."

Don't jump!

The tour kicked off in **LIVERPOOL** with a set from The Farm, who played their seminal hit *All together now* on top of the FBU fire truck. TUC general secretary Frances O'Grady made a speech.

Comedian Russell Brand headlined the tour's **LONDON** show, which took place on the South Bank. Despite being heckled by retired London firefighter Joe McVeigh to stay on

the stage and not jump onto the fragile top of the fire truck's cabin, Brand praised firefighters for the work they do daily putting their lives on the line to rescue people.

Another comedian joining the London show was Shappi Khorsandi who spoke movingly about her friend who died during the 7/7 bombings and where firefighters played an important role in getting the capital back on its feet after the devastating terrorist attack. Rounding off the show, Mark Thomas gathered the audience together for an intimate comedy set.

Demonstrators in **REDCAR** were treated to a very individual folk version of *Ring of Fire*, the famous Johnny Cash song whose title the tour took, by fire-fighter band Fat Medicine.

BRIGHTON saw the unmissable, brightly coloured Welephant take to the top of the fire truck to dance and **GREAT YARMOUTH** firefighters demonstrated to the public what the fire service would look like if the government keeps raising the pension age – complete with zimmer frames

Daniel Glyn, a local comedian in **CARDIFF**, started off a group sing along with everyone joining in to the Fireman Sam theme song.

Davey Hopper, secretary of the National Union of Mineworkers in the north east, gave a rousing speech in **SUNDERLAND** about how fire-fighters had helped his union during the 1984-5 miners' strike.

Shows in **HEREFORD** and **LEICESTER** both saw more than 1,000 members of the public in a single day sign up to support the union's campaign against cuts.

Finishing in **BRISTOL** on 3 October, the tour proved a great success in engaging the public, says Oliver Richards, the Ring of Fire host and singer. "The public support for firefighters and the FBU throughout the tour has been overwhelming.

"People are worried that a great institution like the fire and rescue service faces an uncertain future in the face of Tory cuts."

Marginal seats

MPs including Katy Clark, Tom Blenkinsop, John McDonnell, Dave Anderson and Julie Elliott joined the tour along with a number of parliamentary candidates for key marginal seats that could decide the outcome of next year's general election.

Thousands of signatures were collected for a petition calling for fresh investment in the fire and rescue service and not cuts.

On where the tour goes next Matt Wrack, FBU general secretary, said: "The Ring of Fire has only just started.

"We will continue campaigning vigorously across the country, engaging the public ahead of the next general election.

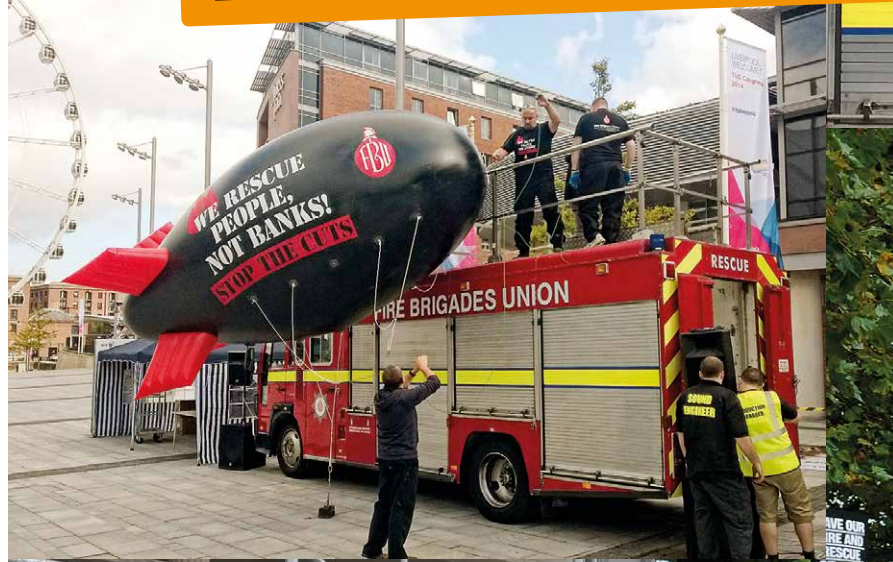
"We need politicians of all parties to recognise that, with continued cuts and no fresh investment, it will take longer for fire engines to arrive on the scene of an emergency with fewer firefighters on that engine to tackle the blaze and perform a rescue.

"Lives have been lost because of government cuts and, without investment, this will continue."

Cardiff



Tour starts at TUC



Welephant k



in Liverpool

London supporters at South Bank



kept things lively in Brighton

Firefighters have been left with no option but to take strike action after the government failed to deliver on promises of a revised offer on pensions – and the FBU is continuing to use every resource and opportunity at its disposal to obtain a fair deal



PENSIONS: OUR F

After numerous delays the Westminster fire minister Penny Mordaunt met with FBU officials and made no new revised pensions offer, backtracking on her promise to get the “best deal possible” for firefighters.

The regulations to implement the new pension scheme were originally due in mid-August. That date was subsequently pushed back to early September, before it was again delayed until at least mid-October; before a final push back until 27 October.

The delays on the laying of pension regulations were, as the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) stated, because they were looking to get the best pension offer.

No new proposals

However despite numerous suggestions from the fire minister that improvements were on the way – at a meeting with the FBU negotiators on 22 October she confirmed that there were no new proposals.

At the time of going to press, firefighters in England were due to go on strike over four days, totalling a 96-hour walkout between 31 October and 4 November.

Matt Wrack, FBU general secretary, said: “Firefighters have always conducted negotiations in good faith and it is outrageous that no new offer has been made, after the minister communicated that such offers would be put forward.

“The government left us no option but to take strike action after raising the hopes of tens of thousands of firefighters only to offer nothing.”

Legal advice

Addressing concerns about what the forced implementation of a new pension scheme would mean for the campaign, Matt Wrack slammed a number of chief fire officers who have suggested that further action would be prevented if they were implemented.

The general secretary confirmed that the union had taken legal advice on this matter and the



“We will continue to use every tool at our disposal – continuing negotiations, political action, legal action and industrial action”

FIGHT CONTINUES

implementation of the pension scheme would not affect any future action. As the new pension scheme is the subject of a lawful trade dispute, and that dispute is the property of the union and its members, the FBU is the only body that can settle the dispute.

N Ireland ballot

This comes after firefighters in N Ireland voted to accept the executive council’s statement that the trade dispute for their region should be lifted, taking into account revised proposals that include both a normal pension age of 55 and an improved accrual rate.

This offer is the only one made so far in the United Kingdom which offers a normal pension age of 55.

Sean Starbuck, FBU national officer, said: “This is another clear indication that we do not walk away from real negotiations and are committed to resolving this long running pension dispute.”

Wales proposal

On 23 October the general secretary received a

letter from the Welsh government which outlined an improved position with a flexible retirement option that could affect a significant number of firefighters.

The executive council recognised this and did not call on Welsh firefighters to take strike action on this occasion – but the situation continues to be closely monitored.

Starbuck added: “DCLG, unlike all other parts of the UK, have failed to show any leadership to offer revised proposals that could bring this dispute to a resolution.”

All options on the table

Matt Wrack sent a clear message to firefighters and the government: “This dispute is not over, and will not be over, until a decent pension offer has been made for firefighters to vote on.

“We will continue to use every tool at our disposal – continuing negotiations, political action, legal action and industrial action until a fair deal is reached.”

A partnership to curb rights and boost privatisation

Washington and Brussels are quietly negotiating a deal that would enable multinational companies to take governments to court over laws protecting workers' rights and public sector provision

Alarm bells are ringing in the trade union movement over a new and grave threat to workers' rights that would also undermine the ability of any future British government to roll back privatisation.

The Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (or TTIP) – a trade agreement between the US and the EU – has been causing concern for some time. It is due to be signed into being at the end of the year.

What is TTIP?

TTIP is designed to:

- Open markets in the services sector – including public services – to competition and delivery from private companies
- Introduce legal mechanisms that would allow multinational corporations to challenge government actions that they see as threatening their interests. They include so-called investor-state dispute settlement (ISDS) mechanisms.
- Achieve “mutual recognition” of government regulations in areas like manufacturing, chemicals and pharmaceuticals, food and the environment
- Eliminate preferential treatment for local suppliers

- Remove the remaining tariffs (taxes) on goods traded between the EU and the US.

In essence, this means that if a future British government wanted to kick out a private company from a public sector contract, the company could sue the government for the loss of future profits.

Members might ask: What is wrong with more trade, particularly in a tough economic climate?

But TTIP is not about easing tariff barriers to trade, but about regulation and “investor protection” – giving more power to corporations over and above national interests.

For example, the French company Veolia, which has public sector contracts in the UK, is currently using existing “investor-state dispute settlement” (ISDS) mechanisms to sue the Egyptian government for increasing the minimum wage.

Similar regulations were used against the central European state of Slovakia when it sought to bring health insurance back into the public sector and against Australia over laws enforcing plain packaging for cigarettes.

ISDS processes are often conducted in secret and are not based on existing



Trade unions and charities organised a protest against TTIP in Parliament Square, London, in October

case law. Governments have no right of appeal – undermining their ability to defend the implementation of their policies.

ISDS mechanisms like TTIP create a “regulatory chill” that encourages governments not to regulate in the public interest for fear of litigation.

The UK government and European Commission have so far refused to say which services are being discussed in negotiations around TTIP or to exclude services such as firefighting, health, social services or further and higher education from TTIP.

The Conservative-led coalition also supports TTIP because of the effect it would have on hard-won trade union rights.

US employment law does not



recognise a number of international conventions governing employment and workers' rights.

Legislation in 24 US states, described as "right to work" laws by their right-wing backers, seriously limits the capacity of trade union members to bargain and organise.

Should TTIP be agreed, UK and European legislation protecting workers could be challenged by multinationals who could also relocate in a "race to the bottom" to cut costs.

Controversial

Unsurprisingly, negotiations over such controversial measures have been conducted away from the glare of publicity with the European Union having exclusive powers to negotiate

trade and investment agreements.

Negotiations are being led by the European Commission in Brussels with frequent reports to the European Council, which is made up of the heads of national governments that are members of the EU.

The final deal will have to be approved by the EU member states and the European Parliament. But neither the states nor the parliament will be able to make amendments; they can only accept or reject the final deal.

As ever, it is down to trade unionists to mobilise among the general public to put pressure on politicians to halt this potentially devastating deal.

This year's TUC congress voted to oppose TTIP but only if lay members take action can it be defeated.

WHAT YOU CAN DO

- Contact your MP, MEP, MSP or assembly member and raise your concerns about TTIP and ask them to oppose the deal
- Ask your branch/brigade/region to link up with other organisations locally that are campaigning against TTIP – such as War on Want and the World Development Movement
- Organise a public meeting, lobby your MP and write to your local paper
- Spread the word about TTIP on social media such as Twitter (#stopTTIP) and Facebook.

Legal Beagle

Social media – how to stay safe

FBU
FREEPHONE
LEGAL ADVICE
0808 100 6061
IN SCOTLAND
0800 089 1331

Senior employment law solicitor Kate Lea answers questions about Twitter and Facebook

Q I've heard stories about workers who were sacked as a result of their use of social media. Can employers really do this?

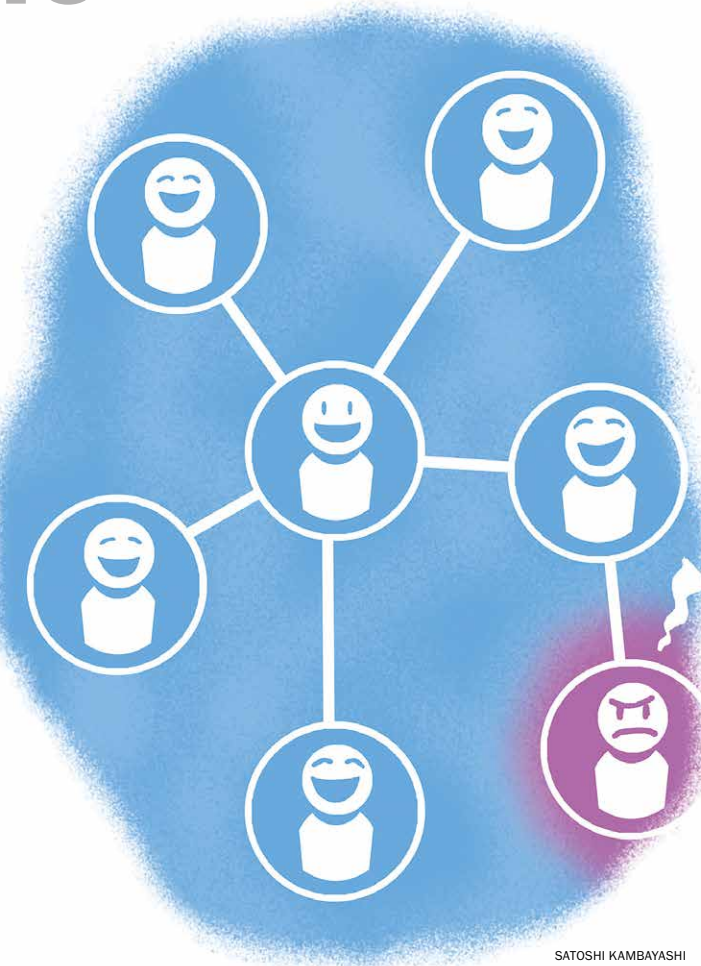
A Unfortunately, yes. The FBU legal service is helping more and more members disciplined by their employers as a result of their activity on social media such as Facebook and Twitter.

Members making comments about their colleagues, their employer or about members of the public have learned the hard way that what might feel like a private conversation or interaction online can be viewed by an employer as grounds for disciplinary action including dismissal.

An employee will not always lose their job as a result of work-connected social media activity – simply posting something on social media that, perhaps, they should not have should not automatically lead to dismissal. But FBU members need to be aware of the risks.

Q What might an Employment Tribunal take into account when considering a case of social media misuse?

A Employment Tribunals (ETs) always look at each case on its own facts but the sort of things they take into account are the impact on the



SATOSHI KAMBAYASHI

organisation, or – in cases of abuse, harassment or discrimination – the impact the post or comment had on the person or group at whom it was directed.

The High Court decided in one case that a Christian employee who posted comments against gay marriage on social media was not guilty of misconduct and did not act in breach of his contract on the grounds that the employee was entitled to express his views about gay marriage.

The court also considered the extent to which it was appropriate for employees to be disciplined for exercising their rights to freedom of expression and to manifest

their religious beliefs.

In contrast, another employee was held to have been fairly dismissed for making derogatory comments about customers on Facebook.

Q How can I avoid falling foul of the law?

A The best piece of advice is always to act cautiously while using your social media accounts. Avoid anything that:

- Could be viewed as defamatory towards your fire service or colleagues;
- Could be viewed as harassment, abuse or intimidation – whether towards a colleague or a member of the public;

- Could reflect badly on your fire service or bring it into disrepute; or
- Directly or indirectly divulges confidential or sensitive workplace information.

Useful guidance from the official conciliation service ACAS suggests that employees should always be aware of who might be able to see their profiles and to think carefully if they want their co-workers to have access.

Privacy settings can change frequently and should be checked regularly and updated if necessary. ACAS says that it is vital to understand that anything posted on social media can easily be picked up by somebody with access to your profile and passed on to others, including your employer.

The ACAS guidance recommends that employers develop a clear policy so that staff know what are and are not acceptable standards of behaviour when using the internet, emails, smart phones and social media, such as networking websites, blogs and tweets.

ACAS also recommends that employers be sensitive to employees' privacy and work-life balance. The reality, though, is that the level of this "sensitivity" will vary between brigades.

● If you are disciplined by your employer for your use of social media or would like guidance on this issue then you should contact your FBU representative in the first instance.

'It's a flexible and convenient way to learn new skills'

Glen Gorman took advantage of a special offer for FBU members to hone his photographic skills and is now set to turn a hobby into a job

Glen Gorman may have just retired after 30 years in fire and rescue – but he isn't putting his feet up just yet.

He is about to turn a hobby into a second career as a photographer. In fact, he's already started. He has a photo studio at home, plus a portable one he can take out on jobs.

In the past couple of years, Glen has carved out a niche for himself taking head and shoulders portraits of performing artists in need of a classy calling card. He also does makeover shots. He already has his own website, and a good few satisfied clients.

But he's just about to raise his game to a whole new level – taking aerial photos, videos and stills for high-end estate agents using the latest technology.

There has been a bit of a boom in

photography recently among FBU members, it seems.

Glen is one of 350 FBU members to benefit from an Institute of Photography online photography course provided through the union at heavily reduced rates.

Glen, and another FBU member, were awarded the very rare "certificate of distinction" for their portfolio – according to the FBU's union learning rep.

In fact Glen "scored" 97 per cent for his work on his advanced diploma course – and is just about to end another on digital photo editing from the same online provider.

"The courses are modular which means



you can fit them in around work commitments. It's a very flexible and convenient way to learn new skills and – there's great feedback from tutors. There is also an online forum, where you can exchange ideas with other students."

Glen started taking photographs in his late twenties – but stopped because film-processing costs were too pricey.

Now he reckons that the move to digital cameras has helped fuel the boom in photography – and not just among FBU members.

"Costs could be a real barrier in the past," he says. "You couldn't see the image until the film was developed. All that changed with digital cameras where you can see what you've taken as soon as you've taken it."

Glen has had a varied career.

He started out as a rank-and-file firefighter in Lancashire and spent 20 years in London.

For the last 14 months of his fire service career Glen was seconded to the National Resilience and Assurance Team (NRAT) – primed to deal with major emergencies.

He was part of the chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear explosive team – skilled in mass decontamination. In contrast to that of front-line firefighters, the job is scarcely visible to the public.

Before moving across to national resilience, Glen served as a station



Glen's picture of a bearded dragon from his Institute of Photography course



Glen Gorman:
*Planning to make
the sky the limit in
his second career*

**The Institute of
Photography has kindly
extended to 30 November
2014 the deadline for any
FBU members or their
families and friends who
would like to take up
its photography course
and benefit from the
reduced cost of £49
(instead of £599)**

and stills showing the property set in its grounds,” says Glen.

The booming property market offers huge opportunities for those with the right kit, skills and, crucially, licence, to build a business.

UAVs can produce high quality video footage and stills for brochures. The camera is controlled from the ground and it can be set on automatic to take pictures at regular intervals.

“Flying” a UVA is tightly regulated by the Civil Aviation Authority. Anyone planning to make money from it has to have a licence, which has to be reviewed annually, Glen explains. When he spoke to *Firefighter* he was preparing to go on the CAA-approved training course.

His background in the fire service should stand him in good stead. “Every job has to be risk assessed,” says Glen. He should not have much of a problem with security vetting, given his background national resilience.

When he’s got the UAV and done the training, a new phase of Glen’s second career will be ready for take off, and chances are it could really fly.

● www.glengphotography.co.uk

manager in the inter-agency liaison officer team. He also studied for a masters degree in terrorism studies at the University of East London.

Like most emergency workers, Glen relished the challenge and camaraderie that comes with the job. “It’s been brilliant to help people when they need it and I’ve worked alongside some really excellent colleagues over the years,” he says.

He enjoys meeting the people whose portraits he takes and has carved out a market niche for himself. But now he plans to raise his game to a whole new level – though he’ll be keeping his feet firmly on the ground.

He plans to build a business “flying” UAVs – unmanned aerial vehicles – taking pictures of buildings for high-end estate agents.

It’s pioneering and controversial territory. The same technology has military uses – and Glen is keen to distance his new business venture from the “d” word – drones.

Technology is neutral it can’t be blamed for the use some humans put it to, he says. Drones can be used for benign purposes, emerging as a new tool for humanitarian aid in conflict zones and areas hit by natural disaster.

But it is the growing commercial demand for pictures and videos taken from UAVs that Glen hopes to tap into.

“Someone selling a multi-million pound house would be prepared to pay for a video



Glen’s photograph of a Scops Owl won an award

Prize quiz



Win one of six copies of *London Recruits*

HOW TO ENTER

To win a copy of *London Recruits* please send your answers by 31 December on a postcard to: Prize Competition (Nov/Dec 2014), FBU Head Office, Bradley House, 68 Coombe Road, Kingston upon Thames, KT2 7AE. Please include your name, address and membership number. The winner will be selected at random from all correct entries.



1 Which of these regions of Spain does not have a coastline?

- A – Andalusia
- B – Galicia
- C – Asturias
- D – Extremadura

2 Who designed the Statue Of Liberty?

- A – Edouard Rene de Laboulaye
- B – Antoni Gaudí
- C – Isabella Eugenie Boyer
- D – Frederic Auguste Bartholdi

3 What is the name of Sherlock Holmes older brother?

- A – Morgan
- B – Athelney
- C – Norbury
- D – Mycroft

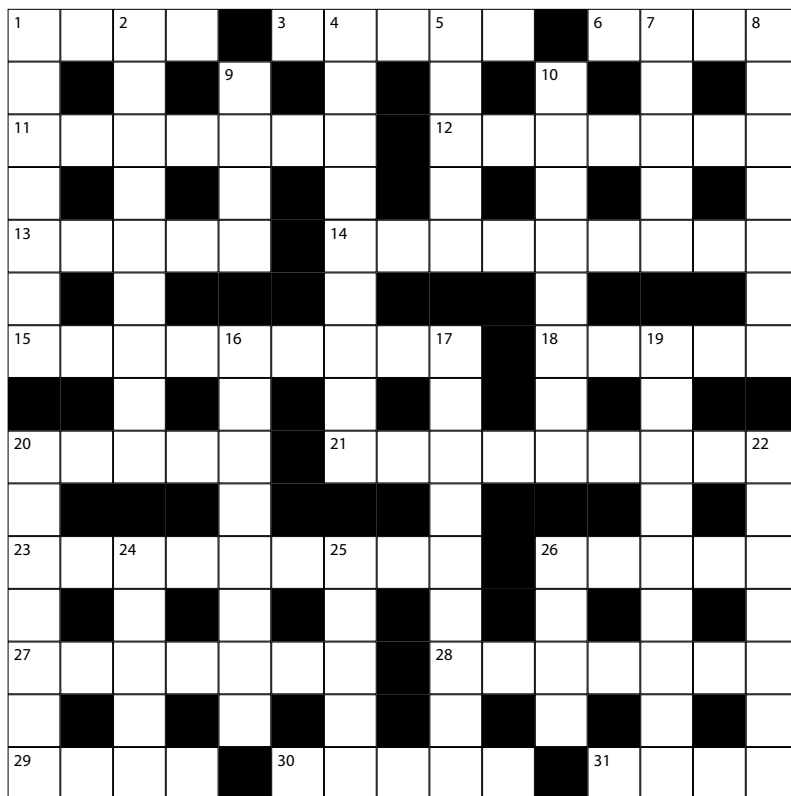


4 Which group was responsible for the sack of Rome in AD410?

- A – The Mongols
- B – The Vandals
- C – The Gauls
- D – The Visigoths

5 With which band did Maureen 'Moe' Tucker play drums?

- A – The Velvelettes
- B – The Velvet Underground
- C – The Marvelettes
- D – New York Dolls



CROSSWORD

ACROSS

- 1 See 3, 16 and 27
- 3, 6 and 1 across Band famed for *Boogie Wonderland* (5, 4, 4)
- 11 Holiday camp host, or highly visible British soldier (7)
- 12 French city (there's a New one in the USA) (7)
- 13 Ambassador; messenger (5)
- 14 Fizzy drink traditionally flavoured with vanilla (5,4)
- 15 Communication device (9)
- 18 Prod gently with the elbow (5)
- 20 Put the kettle on for a nice.... (5)
- 21 Forgivable (9)
- 23 German sausage (9)
- 26 Used to extinguish 1 across (5)
- 27, 1 across Song by The Doors, covered by Jose Feliciano (5,2,4)
- 28 Prickly shrub – especially blackberry (7)
- 29 Uncommon (4)
- 30 Foreign; extra-terrestrial – or film starring Sigourney Weaver (5)
- 31 Retained (4)

DOWN

- 1 Convert to alcohol (7)
- 2 Build anew (9)
- 4 Vegetable with a heart (9)
- 5 Cut of steak (1-4)
- 7 US state (5)
- 8 Pathological medical condition (7)
- 9 Emaciated (4)
- 10 1 across, 3, 6 and 26 across in ancient philosophies (8)
- 16, 1 across Rolling Stones' song (4,4,4)
- 17 Easily aroused (9)
- 19 Open to question (9)
- 20 Shoe-mender (7)
- 22 Honest, sincere, serious (7)
- 24 Ire (5)
- 25 Of a ruling family (5)
- 26 Lacking strength (4)

Last issue's answers and winners



Crossword solution October

October quiz answers

- 1 – B Tina Turner
- 2 – B U2
- 3 – C Hawaii
- 4 – D Calvin Klein
- 5 – B Oliver Richards


Winner of August/September quiz

David Beddow, West Yorkshire

Station Cat

For devotion to duty at their desks

Only for the brave chiefs

 Your Cat has discovered something very odd about the Queen's Fire Service Medal (QFSM), which is supposed to be awarded either "for acts of exceptional courage and skill at the cost of their lives" or "for the exhibition of conspicuous devotion to duty".


In the New Years Honours List it went to the CFOs in Devon and Somerset, Nottinghamshire, Tyne and Wear, West Yorkshire, Lancashire, and Staffordshire.

In the Queen's Birthday Honours it went to CFOs in Cheshire, Gloucestershire and Buckinghamshire, and the deputy CFO in Hereford and Worcester.

Or, to put it another way, every single person who has been given the medal this year is a chief fire officer or a deputy chief fire officer.

Just like the good pay rises, the gongs seem to have been corralled by the top brass.

Sit tight and keep quiet

 So what do you have to do to get one of these gongs?

Pete Greeves, firefighter and the FBU's Norfolk chair, was so curious that he wrote to the Department of Business, Innovation and Skills.

The reply came, bizarrely, from Maria Groves of the Business Support Unit.

She referred him to a website, www.gov.uk/



Getting down: (l-r) Essex firefighters Dan Swansborough, Scott Hepburn and Dean Woodburn

government/publications/birthday-honours-lists-2014, where all is explained.

Apparently Paul Hancock, Cheshire CFO, has "worked tirelessly to create and embed a strong 'Team Cheshire' culture".

He has "improved organisational structures and internal communications, improved relationships with elected members, increasing his own visibility among front line staff and developing new Cheshire-specific core values," whatever that means.


Mark Jones, CFO in Buckinghamshire, has "consistently produced better outcomes for the community whilst driving down costs" – this means he gets things done more cheaply.

Meanwhile Alex Clark, deputy chief officer of the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service, also has a medal from Her Majesty, apparently to recognise his "contribution to the strategic leadership of the SFRS" and "his personal commitment and

contribution to the fire reform programme," which means he's signed up to government cuts.

What do you get a gong for? You get it from sitting at a desk and doing what you're told, that's what.

The only way in Essex

 An accounting error by bosses at Essex fire service has left them owing £15 m to the government. They have had a shortfall of £1.8 m a year since 2006, relating to pensions for injured firefighters, and they have only just found out.

So what will happen? Who's going to have to pay? Well, who do you think?

The fire service says it can use its reserves to pay off the debt, but not the interest on it that a rapacious chancellor will certainly demand.

Ask about that and fire service chiefs start talking like cement mixers. They say "the potential for interest charges on top" would "challenge" managers to rethink future expenditure plans – or to put it another




The Ring of Fire tour in Watford – Why did Hertfordshire FRS get so worked up about it?

way, they are going to cut back on the fire service the people of Essex can expect. Instead of cutting £5.9 m, they are going to cut £7.7 m.

Should we be angry? Not at all. We should be grateful. "Because of our prudent financial management over the last few years, we have built up significant reserves and we are in a healthy financial position and able to wipe out this debt immediately," says acting chief fire officer Adam Eckley.

Diversity training


 So you'd expect Essex firefighters to be in a foul mood. But the red watch at Clacton Fire Station have found a way to lift their spirits.

Each episode of *Ashley Banjo's Secret Street Crew* on Sky 1 follows a group of non-dancers as they learn a street dance routine in secret, and the last group to have a go were five Clacton firefighters.

They were trained to dance by street dance superstars Diversity. There's a picture of them doing it at the top of the page.

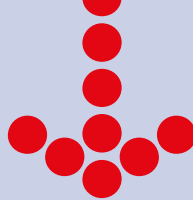
No one can worry about their bosses' incompetence when they look like this.

The ringfenced Ring of Fire

 Herts FRS apparently told on-duty firefighters that, while the FBU's Ring of Fire tour was in Watford, driving past the "gig" would not be allowed – what were they so worried about?



25-year badges



Mark Roberts (l) and **Richard Mallinson** (r), Sleaford, Lincs, receive their 25-year badges from branch rep Mick Smith



Phil Brown (r), white watch, Port Talbot, Mid and West Wales, receives his 25-year badge from brigade secretary Barrie Davies



Spencer Bartley (l), white watch, Roedean, East Sussex, receives his 25-year badge from branch chair Ashley Jones



Craig Langton (l), branch rep, risk reduction, Nottinghamshire, receives his 25-year badge from brigade secretary Alan Coates



Vince Barnes (l) receives his 25-year badge from Hampshire brigade secretary Gary Jackson with white watch Winchester and Hants FBU committee



Tom Cookson (r) receives his 25-year badge from Lancashire brigade chair Kev Deacon with members of blue watch, Preston, looking on



Steve Noble (l), Avon, receives his 25-year badge from brigade organiser John Maggs



Dan Munden (l), Avon, receives his 25-year badge from brigade organiser John Maggs



Paul Doble (r), Yeovil, receives his 25-year badge from branch secretary Brad Atkinson



Paul Marshall (l), Avon, receives his 25-year badge from brigade organiser John Maggs



Graham Willson and grandchildren (r), Plymouth group support, receive his 25-year badge from brigade organiser Andy Gould



Scott Mitchell (r), Torbay group support, receives his 25-year badge from brigade organiser Andy Gould



Scott Mitchell (r), Torbay group support, receives his 25-year badge from brigade organiser Andy Gould



Mike Collings (r), Devon and Somerset training school, receives his 25-year badge from brigade organiser Andy Gould



Richard Lindley (l), Staffordshire, receives his 25-year badge from FBU general secretary Matt Wrack



Alan Berg (l), retained, Penicuik, Scotland, receives his 25-year badge from district chair Denise Christie



Paul Kirsopp (r), green watch, Durham, receives his 25-year badge from branch rep Phil Dashwood



Andy Williams (r), red watch, Hillingdon, London, receives his 25-year badge from branch rep Beltran Perez



Ian Hunter (l), blue watch, Painshill, Surrey, receives his 25-year badge from branch rep Tom Evans with (l-r) Jim Brixley, Nick Streams, Ian Hunter, Tom Evans and Justin Kemp



Mark Wheadon (r), white watch, Roath, receives his 25-year badge from South Wales brigade secretary Alex Psaila with members of white watch looking on



Russ Lewns (r), red watch, Chippenham, receives his 25-year badge from branch rep Andy Thompson with colleagues (l-r) Rob Kynoch, Mark Miller, Nick Ratcliffe, Colin Tailby and Paul Hanlon



Chris Craft (l), blue watch, Central, South Yorkshire, receives his 25-year badge from branch rep Will Selby with fellow members looking on



Dave Morgan (l), Danes Castle, Exeter receives his 25-year badge from brigade organiser Andy Gould



Rob Hogg (r), red watch, Stratton St Margaret, Wiltshire, receives his 25-year badge from brigade secretary Brent Thorley with red watch colleagues looking on



Rob Whittaker (l), white watch, Bradford, receives his 25-year badge from branch rep Andy Pickering with white watch colleagues looking on (l-r) Benjamin Goddard, Michael Gumenuik, Richard White, Rob Whittaker, Adam Turner, Andy Pickering and James Dyson



Acting West Midlands brigade chair Dave Pitt (c) presents 25-year badges to (l-r): **Keith Clarke**, Smethwick, **Adrian Smith**, Brierley Hill, **Mark Harris**, Brierley Hill, **Brian Morris**, Stourbridge, **Tony Calder**, Smethwick, and **Rob Evans**, tech rescue



Andy Garside (l), Peaks Lane, Grimsby, receives his 25-year badge from N E Lincs branch secretary Graham Quickfall with green watch, Immingham East, looking on (l-r) Joe Thornton, Ricky Hoult, Ben Thomas, Wayne Litchfield, Rich Jordan, Sharron Scott



Mal Orr (l), red watch, South Elmsall, West Yorkshire, receives his 25-year badge from branch rep Mark Faulkner



Chris Telford (l), white watch, Barnsley, South Yorkshire, receives his 25-year badge from branch rep Phil O'Connell



Gary Holland (r), red watch, South Elmsall, West Yorkshire, receives his 25-year badge from branch rep Mark Faulkner



Andy Oxnard (r), risk reduction, Nottinghamshire, receives his 25-year badge from regional chair Phil Coates



Nic Browning (l), white watch, Malvern, Hereford and Worcester, receives his 25-year badge from branch secretary Andy Davies



Mark Herrington (r), blue watch, Romford, receives his 25 year-badge from Barking, Dagenham and Havering borough sec Mark Triphook



Saul Bolton (l), green watch, Malvern, Hereford and Worcester, receives his 25-year badge from branch secretary Andy Davies



Gerard O'Neill (l), green watch, Doncaster, South Yorkshire, receives his 25-year badge from regional official Graham Wilkinson



Stephen Shaw (r) receives his 25-year badge from West Yorkshire brigade secretary Dave Williams with Huddersfield blue watch looking on



John Maggs (l), Avon brigade organiser and H&S rep, receives his 25-year badge from national officer John McGhee



Kevin Peat (r), red watch, Sprowston, Norfolk, receives his 25-year badge from brigade secretary Kevin Game with colleagues looking on



Michael Rooke (l), green watch, Dearne, South Yorkshire, receives his 25-year badge from regional official Graham Wilkinson



Andy Blackburn (r) receives his 25-year badge from West Yorkshire brigade secretary Dave Williams with Huddersfield blue watch looking on



Eddy Beaumont (r) receives his 25-year badge from West Yorkshire brigade secretary Dave Williams with Huddersfield blue watch looking on



Nigel Turner (r) receives his 25-year badge from West Yorkshire brigade secretary Dave Williams with Huddersfield blue watch looking on



Andy Rowe (l), green watch, Rivelin, South Yorkshire, receives his 25-year badge from regional official Graham Wilkinson



Richard Hubbard (l), Staffordshire, receives his 25-year badge from FBU general secretary Matt Wrack



Nick Baldwin (l), Avon, receives his 25-year badge from brigade organiser John Maggs



Steven Day (l), Staffordshire, receives his 25-year badge from FBU general secretary Matt Wrack



Dave Brown (r), green watch, Swalwell, Tyne & Wear, receives his 25-year badge from brigade H&S rep Brian Harris



Peter Hamilon (r), green watch, Swalwell, Tyne & Wear, receives 25-year badge from brigade H&S rep Brian Harris



Tony Allen (r), green watch Swalwell, Tyne & Wear, receives his 25-year badge from brigade H&S rep Brian Harris



Paul Martin (r), Erith, London, receives his 25-year badge from branch rep Dan Hughes



Neil Pederson (l), Staffordshire, receives his 25-year badge from FBU general secretary Matt Wrack



Nigel Allen (l), Staffordshire, receives his 25-year badge from FBU general secretary Matt Wrack



Paul Goodman (l), Staffordshire, receives his 25-year badge from FBU general secretary Matt Wrack



Paul Sant (l), Staffordshire, receives his 25-year badge from FBU general secretary Matt Wrack



Lynne Lockhart, control, Scotland, receives her 25-year badge from national officer John McGhee with colleagues David Bennett and Andy Fulton



Mark Norris (l) receives his 25-year badge from Devon and Somerset women's rep Sharon Wilcock with members (l-r) Steve Squires, Darren Taylor and Stu Horwood



Graeme Dickson (l), control rep, Humberside, receives his 25-year badge from Yorks and Humberside EC member Ian Murray



Steve Crowther (r) receives his 25-year badge from West Yorkshire brigade secretary Dave Williams with Huddersfield blue watch looking on



Carl Jones (r), blue watch, Preston, receives his 25-year badge from Lancashire brigade chair Kevin Deacon with blue watch colleagues looking on



Colin Carswell (r), red watch, Great Holm, Buckinghamshire, receives his 25-year badge from branch rep Daniel Graham with red watch looking on



Paul Cotterell (l), Yeovil, receives his 25-year badge from Devon and Somerset brigade organiser Andy Gould



Christopher Gaunt (l), Staffordshire, receives his 25-year badge from FBU general secretary Matt Wrack



Darren Dagless (l), Staffordshire, receives his 25-year badge from FBU general secretary Matt Wrack



David Thorpe (l), Staffordshire, receives his 25-year badge from FBU general secretary Matt Wrack



Ethan Shenton (l), Staffordshire, receives his 25-year badge from FBU general secretary Matt Wrack



Gary Bowcock (l), Staffordshire, receives his 25-year badge from FBU general secretary Matt Wrack



Guy Volpe (l), Staffordshire, receives his 25-year badge from FBU general secretary Matt Wrack



Michael Riley (l), Staffordshire, receives his 25-year badge from FBU general secretary Matt Wrack



Stephen Vousden (l), Staffordshire, receives his 25-year badge from FBU general secretary Matt Wrack



Alan Rogers (l), Staffordshire, receives his 25 year badge from FBU general secretary Matt Wrack

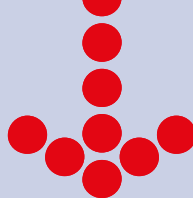


Philip Andrews (l), Staffordshire, receives his 25-year badge from FBU general secretary Matt Wrack



Shaun Burgess (r), green watch, Thorne, South Yorkshire, receives his 25-year badge from divisional rep Nicola Brown

25-year badges



Scott Lomas (r), green watch, Staines, Surrey, receives his 25-year badge from Dan Pearson with colleagues (l-r) Justin Randtoul and Ashley Sandison looking on



Kath Smith, control staff national committee chair, receives her 25-year badge from general secretary Matt Wrack, shortly before losing her job because of the closure of Lancashire control



Neil Trenchard (l), tech fire safety, divisional rep Humberside, receives his 25-year badge from Yorks and Humberside EC member Ian Murray



Dave Mitchelson (r), officers' branch, Durham, receives his 25-year badge from officers' rep Ian Mclean with Peterlee green watch looking on



Phil Richards (r), West Bromwich, receives his 25-year badge from West Midlands acting brigade chair Dave Pitt



Dave Storey (l), risk reduction, Nottinghamshire, receives his 25-year badge from brigade organiser Clare Hudson



Jim Ford (r), red watch, Weymouth, receives his 25-year badge on the picket line (May 2014) from Darren Langdown



David Gibson (l), retained, Penicuik, Scotland, receives his 25-year badge from district chair Denise Christie



Barry Downey (l), West Midlands EC member, receives his 25-year badge from FBU general secretary Matt Wrack



Gary Fitzgerald (l), blue watch, Northolt, receives his 25-year badge from London NW area secretary David Shek



Tim Lean (l), St Austell, receives his 25-year badge from branch rep Nick Jones on the picket line in June 2014



John Cousins (l), Merseyside, receives his 25-year badge from North West ONC rep Ged Phelan

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Change of address or next of kin

Advise your Brigade Organiser of any change of address and Head Office of changes to next of kin or nominations for benefits.

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(England, Wales and N Ireland),

0800 089 1331

(Scotland),

The line provides advice for personal injury, family law, wills, conveyancing, personal finance and consumer issues. For disciplinary and employment-related queries contact your local FBU representative.

T THOMPSONS
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Please include full details for every picture – full

names of everyone who is in it; their station/
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